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ELSTREE RURAL DISTRICT

Annual Report

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year 1946

BY

G. WINN EVERETT, M.B., B.S.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

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The Report

OF

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR

A. D. S. BLACKHALL, A.R.San.I.

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Medical Officer of Health:

G. WINN EVERETT, M.B., B.S., D.R.C.O.G.

Sanitary Inspector:

A. D. S. BLACKHALL, A.R.San.I.

Pupil Assistant:

J. S RUCK (from October 1946)

Clerks:

MISS D. L. HOUGHTON (Unit October 1946)

MISS M. E. HODGKINSON

Public Health Department:

Council Offices, Shenley Road, Boreham Wood, Herts.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

To the Chairman and Members of the Elstree Rural District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting my Sixth Annual Report on the health of the district for the year 1946.

DIPHTHERIA

Fifty-seven per cent. of the children under 5 and sixty-two per cent. of those between 5 and 15 in the district had completed the full course of immunisation at the close of the year under review. There were no notifications of diphtheria during the year.

TUBERCULOSIS

There were sixteen new cases during the year as compared with 23, 11, 20, 16 and 9 respectively in the years 1945 to 1941 inclusive.

VITAL STATISTICS

The birth rate of 19.2 per 1,000 population is the highest since 1931.

HOUSING

It is gratifying to record that the Rural Housing Survey was completed during the year. A summary of the survey is given on page 10 of the Report.

Thirty-four permanent and seventy-four temporary (pre-fabricated) houses were completed and occupied during the year. I am pleased to note that, in the allocation of houses, due priority is being given to tuberculous patients and to families living in overcrowded conditions.

GENERAL

In spite of Staff difficulties, two clerks resigning during the year one of whom has not yet been replaced, I am satisfied that no public health work has been neglected, and I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to the Sanitary Inspector for his energetic and willing co-operation during a year which has produced more than the average crop of problems and difficulties.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

G. WINN EVERETT,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area:		8,339 acres
Population, 1921 Census		4,513
Population, 1931 Census		6,400
Registrar-General's estimate of		
(*a*) resident population mid-1946 ...		11,140
(*b*) average population appropriate to the calculation of death rates ...		
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1946) according to Rate Books ...	Elstree 1,992	2,647
	Shenley 580	
	Ridge 75	
Rateable Value (1st April, 1947)		£117,537
Estimated product of a penny rate (1st April 1947)		£500

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The District comprises the parishes of Shenley and Ridge which are chiefly agricultural and residential, and Elstree. In Elstree the principal occupations are industrial, more particularly the film studios and allied industries, photographic processing, knitting mills, electrical accessories and light engineering. Elstree is to some extent residential, particularly on the west side of the L.M.S. Railway line. On the East side of the L.M.S. Station, in the Boreham Wood portion of the parish, considerable development has taken place. A number of new factories were erected immediately prior to and during the war. Various types of industry are represented, including the manufacture of cosmetics and pharmaceutical chemicals, petrol tanks, pistons, plastics, ventilation equipment as well as printing and light engineering works.

VITAL STATISTICS

		Total	M.	F.
Live Births	Legitimate	203	98	105
	Illegitimate	11	5	6
Birth Rate: 19.2 per 1,000 *estimated resident population.*				
Stillbirths		5	3	2
Rate: 22.8 per 1,000 *total (live and still) births.*				
Deaths		85	48	37
Death Rate: 7.6 per 1,000 *estimated average population.*				

The Comparability Factor (furnished by the Registrar-General to correct anomalies in age and sex distribution, compared with the country as a whole) is not available for 1946. The Death Rates for England and Wales and for the Administrative County of London respectively are given as 11.5 and 12.7 per 1,000 population.

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.
Deaths from puerperal causes:—		
Puerperal sepsis	Nil	—
Other puerperal causes ...	1	4.6
Total	1	4.6

Death rates of infants under one year of age:—

All infants per 1,000 live births	37.4
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	34.5
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	90.9

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	16
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	—
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	—
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	—

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

1. Public Health Officers

One part-time Medical Officer of Health
One whole-time Sanitary Inspector and Meat and Food Inspector.
One whole-time Assistant Sanitary Inspector who is studying for the qualifying examination of the Joint Board.

2. (*a*) Laboratory Facilities

Examination of sputum is carried out at the Herts County Council laboratory. Swabs are examined by the Clinical Research Association. Samples of water and milk are examined at the Public Health Sector Laboratory, Peace Memorial Hospital, Watford.

(*b*) Ambulance Facilities

Cases of infectious diseases are conveyed by the Joint Isolation Hospital Ambulance. Non-infectious cases for Wellhouse Hospital are conveyed by the Wellhouse Ambulance. For other hospitals an arrangement has been made with the Watford Corporation for the use of their ambulance service. The Police usually call the Wellhouse Ambulance for street accidents in the district. The Annual Report for 1947 will give details of improved ambulance facilities in the district.

(*c*) Nursing in the Home

There are Nursing Associations in Elstree, Boreham Wood, Shenley and Ridge, supplying three whole-time nurses who work under the Herts County Council. There is no special nursing for infectious diseases.

(*d*) Treatment Centres and Clinics:—

(i) Maternity and Child Welfare	
First Aid Post, Shenley Road, Boreham Wood	Ante-Natal: 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 2 p.m. Infants: Tuesdays: 2 to 4 p.m.
Clinic: Fieldways, Wellhouse Lane, Barnet	Tuesdays: Morn. Ante-Natal. Aft. Children.
(ii) Tuberculosis Dispensary	
Out-patients' Department, Wellhouse Hospital, Barnet	Wednesdays: All day.

(iii) School Dental Clinic Hillside Senior School, Boreham Wood	Wednesdays: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
(iv) Child Guidance Clinic H.C.C. Combined Social Services Centre, Hill End Hospital, St. Albans	Mondays to Fridays: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Patients seen by appointment only)
(v) Venereal Diseases Special Treatment Clinic, Oster Hills, St. Albans	Females: Tuesdays 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 5 to 7 p.m. Fridays 2 to 4 p.m. Males: Wednesdays 2 to 4 p.m. Fridays 5 to 7 p.m.

(*e*) HOSPITALS

Wellhouse Hospital, Barnet	General hospital containing 600 beds, including maternity beds; managed by the Public Assistance Committee. Has facilities for operative surgery, X-ray, and massage, and has a whole-time pathologist.
Victoria Hospital Barnet	Voluntary hospital containing 52 beds.
Bushey and District Hospital, Bushey	Local cottage hospital, containing 37 beds.
Joint Isolation Hospital, Barnet	Infectious diseases are sent to this hospital, which contains 54 beds.
Joint Smallpox Hospital, Cheshunt	
Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Ware	Provided by the Hertfordshire County Council.

The hospital accommodation appears to be adequate.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. (i) WATER

The following information with respect to the water supply of the area is given in accordance with Circular 28/46 of the Ministry of Health.

1. The water supply was maintained during 1946 at a satisfactory standard in (*a*) quality and (*b*) quantity.
2. The Colne Valley Water Company are the suppliers and they state that frequent chemical and bacteriological examinations of the raw water and of the treated waters

were carried out by the Company's staff and by the County Public Health Laboratory. The results were satisfactory. One sample was taken by the Sanitary Inspector, the result of which was satisfactory.

3. The water is not plumbo-solvent.

4. There was no action during the year in respect of any contamination.

5. Of the 2,647 houses in the district
   (*a*) About 2,608 or 99 per cent. are supplied from piped water mains direct to the house and
   (*b*) About 25 or 1 per cent. by means of standpipes.

   The few remaining houses are without piped water supply.

(ii) Drainage and Sewerage

The Sewerage scheme for the Cowleyhill Housing Estate was completed during the year.

2. Rivers and Streams

Several cases of minor pollution of streams have been investigated. The development of the factory estate on the south side of Elstree Way, Boreham Wood, has given rise to several instances of oil pollution of water courses. These have been traced and the factories concerned have been required to take the necessary steps to prevent further pollution.

Two ponds were treated with D.D.T. as a precaution against the breeding of mosquitoes. Rabley Pond, lying across the parish boundary between Shenley and Ridge, was filled in during the year and a long-standing nuisance abated. At the same time the roadside ditch adjoining the pond was culverted. This work was carried out by the Council in pursuance of their powers under Section 260 of the Public Health Act 1936.

3. (i) Closet Accommodation

With the exception of about 80 pail closets at out-lying farms and farm cottages all the dwelling houses in the district are served by water closets; these, with the exception of a few which discharge into cesspools, are connected to public sewers.

(ii) Public Cleansing

House refuse is collected from the whole of the district by the Council's own staff (under the control of the Engineer and Surveyor), and disposed of by controlled tipping at Green Street, Shenley.

(iii) Sanitary Inspection of the Area

The prescribed tabular statement is contained in the Sanitary Inspector's report, which commences on page 13.

(iv) Shops and Offices.

No action was taken during the year.

(v) Camping Sites

(*a*) The number of sites in the area which were used during 1946 was one, licensed by the Council under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

(*b*) Ten annual licences authorising individual applicants to station and use moveable dwellings were issued during the year.

(*c*) Estimated maximum number of campers resident in the area at one time during the summer season, excluding holders of individual licences, 40.

(vi) Smoke Abatement

No action was taken during the year.

(vii) Swimming Baths

There are no public or privately owned swimming baths in the area.

(viii) Eradication of Bed Bugs

Two premises were disinfested by means of D.D.T. Spray. Subsequent visits were paid but no further infestation was discovered.

4. Schools

The sanitary condition of the schools is satisfactory. The water is supplied by the Colne Valley Water Company. The schools are visited regularly by the Assistant School Medical Officer, and especially on an outbreak of any infectious disease for the purpose of excluding or examining possible contacts and advising on any necessary measures.

No schools were closed for infectious disease.

SECTION D

HOUSING

One hundred and thirty-one visits and inspections were made in connection with the Rural Housing Survey, which was completed in September. The provisional classification is as follows:

	No. of Houses
Categories 1 & 2	1,338
(Satisfactory in all respects or with minor defects only)	
Category 3	65
(Requiring repair, structural alteration or improvement)	
Category 4	6
(Appropriate for reconditions under the Housing (Rural Workers Acts.)	
Category 5	94
(Unfit for habitation and beyond repair at reasonable expense)	
Total	1,503

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

(*a*) Milk Supply

See page 18 of the Sanitary Inspector's Report.

(*b*) Slaughterhouses and Food Supplies

See page 18 of the Sanitary Inspector's report.

SECTION F

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

There were 10 cases of scarlet fever. The disease was of a mild type, and there were no deaths. Eight of the cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital, Barnet.

There were no cases of diphtheria. Diphtheria anti-toxin is immediately available if required.

Seventy-six vaccinations were performed by the Medical Officer of Health.

Disinfection of infected premises is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector.

The following table gives the incidence of notifiable diseases during the year:—

Disease	Total notified	Total cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	10	8	–
Diphtheria	1	1	–
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	–	–
Erysipelas	2	1	–
Measles	31	1	–
Whooping Cough	11	2	–
Pneumonia	11	2	2
Dysentery	19	17	–

Age-Group	Under 1	1 to 2	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	15 to 20	20 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 65	65 & up
Scarlet Fever		2	1		2	1	3	1				
Diphtheria										1		
Erysipelas										1	1	
Measles	3	1	4	3	4	14		1	1			
Whooping Cough ...		2		5	2	2						
Pneumonia	2			1		2			1	2	3	
Dysentery						1			2	3	6	7
Puerperal Pyrexia ...												

Tuberculosis—*New cases and mortality during* 1945.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 ...								
1— 5 ...	1			1				
5—15 ...				1	1		1	
15—25 ...	1			1	1	1		
25—35 ...	4					1		
35—45 ...	2			1				
45—55 ...	1							
55—65 ...	1		1		1			
65 and up ...	1							
TOTALS	11	—	1	4	3	2	1	—

Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector

To the Chairman and Members of the
Elstree Rural District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

The year 1946 has seen the completion of two tasks which my last report heralded: the Rural Housing Survey and a detailed revision of the Factory Register. I hope that, in 1947, I shall be within view of another milestone, the rehousing of all the badly overcrowded families in the district. When this is done, the question of slum clearance will urgently demand your consideration. The housing survey has revealed that, in my own opinion, ninety-four houses in the district are unfit for human habitation and not capable of being made fit. But for the war, many of these houses would long since have been the subject of Demolition Orders or included in Clearance Areas. I cannot tell you with what relish I look forward to the day of reckoning for the slum dwelling. *Keep the young generation in hail*, it has been wisely said, *And bequeath them no tumbled house.*

Half-way through the year I completed twenty-one years in local government service. In that period there have been disappointments and frustrations in plenty, and there have been some achievements. If, as I hope, I have managed to develop a stubborn reluctance to become discouraged by the frustration, it is because the achievements are worthwhile, and because —above all things—the *bacillus publicae salutis* has got into my blood stream!

You have given me, throughout the year, the fullest possible support and encouragement; I therefore submit to you my eighth Annual Report (a prosaic record of the achievements of 1946) with the usual modicum of pride and an abundant measure of gratitude.

I have the honour to remain,

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

A. D. S. BLACKHALL,

Sanitary Inspector.

PARTICULARS OF INSPECTIONS DURING THE YEAR

Rural Housing Survey:	
Inspections	10
Visits and re-inspections	121
Public Health Act inspections	110
Public Health Act re-inspections	284
Visits re overcrowding, including computation of permitted numbers	47
Visits in respect of:—	
Infectious diseases	64
Verminous premises	18
Accumulations	35
Animals	5
Bakehouses	13
Dirty houses	11
Drainage	118
Factories	77
Smoke nuisances	1
Outworkers	—
Shops	1
Offensive Trades...	—
Water Supply	23
Cowsheds	85
Dairies	114
Food Preparers	31
Meat Shops	23
Milk Shops	11
Slaughterhouses	25
Stables and piggeries	4
Dustbins	146
Ice Cream Manufacturers and Dealers	5
Tents, Vans and Sheds (Moveable Dwellings) ...	20
Passage paving	1
Offices	1
Conveniences	27
Rats	36
Water Courses	147
Housing Accommodation	756
Milk Samples	16
Other inspections	4
TOTAL	2,390

DETAILS OF INTIMATION AND STATUTORY NOTICES SERVED DURING THE YEAR

Intimation Notices

Nature of Defects	No. of Notices served
General housing defects including leaking roofs, dampness, defective plaster, floors, window-frames, etc.... ...	60
Absence of necessary information in rent books (Sections 4 and 62 of the Housing Act 1936)	11
Overcrowding	1
Drainage	20
Defective paving of yards and passages	1
Defective w.c. and sink connections	29
W.C. without proper flushing cistern	1
Absence of, or dilapidated dustbins	49
Choked and insanitary water courses	15
Filthy or verminous premises	—
Insufficient water supply	6
Waste of water (referred to the Colne Valley Water Board)	5
Offensive accumulations	2
Improper keeping of animals	—
Dairies and cowsheds...	3
Food Preparers	—
Factories and Offices	5
Bakehouses	2
Stables and Piggeries	1
Nuisance from smoke or effluvia	1
TOTAL	212

Statutory Notices

Nature of defects	Statute	No of Notices served	No. of Houses or Premises affected
Houses not reasonably fit	Section 9, Housing Act 1936	2	1
Defective drain ...	Section 39, ... Public Health Act 1936	1	1
Defective W.C. ...	Section 44, Public Health Act 1936	1	1
Paving of yards and passages	Section 56, Public Health Act 1936	1	1
Noxious accumulation	Section 79, Public Health Act 1936	1	1
Nuisances:			
Defects in dwelling houses	Section 93 Public Health Act 1936	12	12
Accumulation or deposit	Section 93, Public Health Act 1936	2	1
Milk and Dairies (Lime washing of cowshed	Milk and Dairies Order 1926	1	1

IMPROVEMENTS CARRIED OUT IN PURSUANCE OF INSPECTIONS MADE AND NOTICES SERVED

	No. of Houses
Repairs to plastering and woodwork	24
Floors repaired	11
Window frames repaired and sash cords renewed... ...	4
Leaking roofs and gutters repaired	18
External brickwork repointed or repaired	1
Dirty rooms cleansed or redecorated	6
Dampness remedied	14
Cooking ranges and firegrates repaired or renewed ...	11
Facilities for domestic washing provided or improved ...	1
Adequate water supply provided	4
Drains cleared and drainage systems repaired	13
W.c. and sink connections repaired...	27
Paving to yards and passages repaired	—
Dustbins provided	6
Water courses cleansed	1
Accumulations removed	4
Nuisance from the keeping of animals abated	—
Cowsheds and dairies limewashed	1
Dairy accommodation provided or improved	1
Cowshed approaches cleansed	—
Food preparers' premises improved	—
Rooms disinfected	18
Verminous houses disinfested	2
Bakehouses cleansed and limewashed	1
Factory defects remedied	—
Smoke nuisances remedied	—
Moveable dwellings removed	—
Stables and Piggeries limewashed	1
Miscellaneous	—
TOTAL	169

ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED AND INSPECTED AND PARTICULARS OF CONDEMNATIONS

	Cattle ex. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (estimated) ...	–	5	10	–	160
Number inspected	–	3	8	–	126
All diseases except Tuberculosis					
Whole carcases condemned ...	–	–	–	–	–
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	–		–	–	–
Percentage (of the number inspected) affected with disease (other than tuberculosis) ...	–	–	–	–	–
Tuberculosis only					
Whole carcases condemned ...	–	–	–	–	–
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	–	–	–	–	2
Percentage (of the number inspected) affected with tuberculosis	–	–	–	–	1.6%

MILK AND DAIRIES ACTS AND ORDERS

Number of accredited milk producers	13
Number of tuberculin tested milk producers	3
Number of other producers	6
Number of retail purveyors	12

During the year 210 inspections were made of cowsheds, dairies and milkshops. Twelve samples of milk were taken from purveyors within the district; of this number six were of designated milks all of which satisfied the standard imposed by the Milk (Special Designations) Order 1936.

The following table gives the results of samples taken in the district by the County Council:—

	No. of Samples	Satisfactory	Failed Meth. Blue	Failed B. Coli	Failed Both	Failed Phos. Test
Accredited Milk ...	62	46	16	—	—	—
T.T. Milk	13	8	5	—	—	—
School Milk	1	—	1	—	—	—
Pasteurised Milk ...	2	2	—	—	—	—